

Local musician, Ben Arnold is one talented singer, songwriter and keyboard player. His independently produced album Signal My Arrival (available on cassette in local stores) is filled with catchy pop-rock tunes. Tasty and accessible, Arnold is a strong and inventive lyricist, and manages to resist the temptation for cliches with surprising effectiveness. His arrangements are fully realized and he's not afraid to go for a big sound, using synthesized strings on the bitter ballad, "Laid It All to Rest," then turn around and rock hard on "White Bear Black." Arnold's polished instrumentation is offset by his vocals which are gutsy and down to earth. Even on the pretty songs, he doesn't sing pretty, and is sometimes reminiscent of Randy Newman, sneering out the angry lines and making you pay attention to the words.

Ben Arnold Band with the Knife and Fork Band: Thu., Apr. 21 at 10 p.m. at J.C. Dobbs, 304 South St., 928-1943.

--Peter Brown